

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for withdrawing the finality of the previous Official Action dated August 20, 2004.

In the above-noted Official Action, claims 15-17 and 27-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over FCC CC Docket No. 92-105. Claims 18-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over FCC CC Docket No. 92-105, in view of MORRISEY (U.S. Patent No. 5,524,146), and further in view of PELTZ-STRAUSS (ex parte letter and comments from the National Association of the Deaf submitted to the Federal Communications Commission on August 2, 1999). Claims 20-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over FCC CC Docket No. 92-105, in view of KEATING et al. (comments from the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International and the National Emergency Number Association submitted to the Federal Communications Commission on September 14, 1998). Claims 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over FCC CC Docket 92-105, in view of BRESLIN (ex parte letter and comments from Bell Atlantic submitted to the Federal Communications Commission on August 2, 1999).

Applicants traverse each of the above-noted rejections.

The outstanding Official Action asserts that FCC Docket No. 92-105 discloses, suggests or renders obvious the features recited in claim 15. In this regard, claim 15 recites "establishing a communications connection between the communications device and the telecommunications relay service center over a signaling system 7 (SS7) feature group D trunk line; and forwarding a charge number (CN) to the telecommunications relay service center over the signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line".

Applicants initially note that the outstanding Official Action has misinterpreted the term “charge number” as recited in claim 15. In this regard, the outstanding Official Action asserts at page 3 that “FCC ‘105 discloses forwarding a charge number (or consumer’s carrier of choice) to the telecommunications relay service center (See Page 20, lines 9-16 and Page 91, line 10 through Page 92, line 15)”. Applicants respectfully submit that the outstanding Official Action is in error, as one of ordinary skill in the art would not interpret (or misinterpret) the “consumer’s carrier of choice” disclosed in FCC Docket No. 92-105 as a “charge number”.

In this regard, Applicants would initially like to explain the meaning of the term “charge number” as recited in claim 15. A “charge number” refers broadly to the calling party’s billing number in a Signaling System 7 environment for billing or routing purposes.

Applicants’ present specification describes “charge number” in this manner. For example, Applicants’ specification discloses, at paragraph [0029], that “the common service logic of the service control point can determine the originating location of a call based on the calling party number, the NPANXX, the charge number, the automatic number identification, or any other identifier that explicitly or implicitly indicates the originating location of the call” (emphasis added). Thus, the charge number determines the originating location of the call. In contrast, “the consumer’s carrier of choice” is not related to the originating location of the call.

Applicants’ specification further discloses, at paragraph [0054], that “charge number (CN)” is provided “if the trunk group is SS7” to “consistently provide identifying information”. Further, the present application discloses, at paragraphs [0025] and [0054],

that the information that is presented to a telecommunications relay service center depends on the type of feature group D trunk line used in the connection between a switch and the telecommunications relay service center. Accordingly, while the absence of ANI information is not explicitly recited as the subject of the claims, the present invention can reliably provide the charge number (CN) as an identifier in situations where ANI is not reliably provided.

In contrast to the invention recited in Applicants' claims, the references applied in the outstanding Official Action do not disclose providing charge number information to a telecommunications relay service center over a signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line. In this regard, FCC CC Docket No. 92-108 does not anywhere disclose, suggest or render obvious the above noted features recited in claim 15. Rather, the portions of FCC CC Docket No. 92-108 cited in the outstanding Official Action only disclose that a carrier of the customer's choice can be used for routing calls from a TRS center.

In particular, the comments at page 20, lines 9-16 (of Ms. Strauss) are only that a "customer should be secure in the knowledge that the communications assistant will have ready access to information about the consumer's carrier of choice" (emphasis added). Further, the comments at page 91, line 10 through page 92, line 15 (of Mr. McClelland and Mr. Varma) are also directed to the ability to make calls from a telecommunications relay service center using the caller's "carrier of choice". However, the features of claim 15 that relate to a "charge number" are not disclosed in FCC CC Docket No. 92-108; nor is there any explanation in the outstanding Official Action as to

what basis the Examiner has for considering the “carrier of choice” relevant to the features of claim 15 that relate to a “charge number”.

Additionally, the comments at page 99 (of Mr. Bossi of AT&T) are only that “[w]e simply use MF [multi-frequency] in-band signaling to drop all of the information up to the access tandem, in hopes that the alternative carrier is there waiting to intercept”. However, the only information that FCC CC Docket No. 92-108 discloses sending is ANI information. In contrast, Applicants’ claims are directed to forwarding a charge number (CN)... over the signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line. As should be apparent, sending ANI information over a multifrequency trunk, as in FCC CC Docket No. 92-108, is not to what Applicants’ claims are directed; rather, Applicants’ claim 15 recites “forwarding a charge number (CN)... over the signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line”.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the only identifier described in FCC CC Docket No. 92-105 as being provided to a TRS is ANI, and not a charge number (CN). Moreover, the ANI is forwarded over a multifrequency trunk, and not a signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line.

Applicants further submit that there is no motivation to modify the AT&T network as asserted in the outstanding Official Action, because one would need to replace multifrequency trunk groups in AT&T’s network at an unknown, but surely significant, cost. Further, even if one were to replace AT&T’s multifrequency trunk groups with the signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line recited in claim 15, there is no suggestion in any reference to then forward “a charge number (CN)... over the signaling system 7

feature group D trunk line". Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that no motivation exists in the prior art to modify the references as asserted in the outstanding Official Action; rather, the only motivation to modify the AT&T network as asserted in the outstanding Official Action is the impermissible motivation of the Examiner to obtain Applicants' claimed invention in hindsight.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-noted features recited in claim 15 are not disclosed, suggested or rendered obvious by FCC CC Docket No. 92-105. Applicants further note that the above-noted features recited in claim 15 are also not disclosed, suggested or rendered obvious by any other reference applied by the Examiner; nor does the Examiner assert that these features are disclosed, suggested or rendered obvious by any other reference. Accordingly, if the rejection of claim 15 is maintained in the next Official Action, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide a specific prior-art teaching of "forwarding a charge number (CN) to the telecommunications relay service center over the signaling system 7 feature group D trunk line", in the claimed combination. In the absence of such a teaching, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of features recited in claim 15 are allowable over the references applied in the outstanding Official Action. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 15.

Applicants note that claims 24 and 27 each recite features of the present invention similar to the above-noted features recited in claim 15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 24 and 27, at least for reasons similar to the above-noted reasons for the allowability of claim 15.

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Applicants further submit that claims 16-23, 25-26 and 28 are allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim, as well as for reasons related to their own recitations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, as well as an indication of the allowability of each of the claims now pending.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance, and believe that they have now done so. Applicants have discussed the features recited in Applicants' claims and have shown how these features are not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by the references cited in the Official Action.

Should there be any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed number.

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